

New Mannheim commissary scheduled to open in August



A grand opening ceremony for the new Mannheim Commissary is scheduled for August 18. Europe District began construction on the new, state-of-the-art facility in October 1996. (Photos by Phil Murray)

**By Julie Klooster
Herald-Post Newspaper
Mannheim Reporter**

It is 7 a.m., and you decide to duck into the Mannheim commissary for a cappuccino, fresh roll and donuts for the office before beginning your day.

The commissary?

The bad old days of drafty, warehouse-style grocery institutions are giving way to modern commissaries with a wide range of services, and Mannheim's American community will reap the benefits of these services when the new commissary opens Aug. 18.

Mannheim Commissary Officer Gerlinde Smith says the new store will feature a deli/bakery, pasta bar, custom butcher shop, and Bistro. The Bistro, located at the front of the store, will open at 7 a.m. for breakfast items, as well as throughout the day for lunch and quick dinners.

"Everything is new here, except for me," said Smith. "Customers can come into the Bistro early in

the morning before the rest of the store opens, have their coffee, roll or donut, and pick up something for lunch as well."

Groundbreaking in October 1996 marked the beginning of construction for the nearly \$14 million facility.

Delayed by changes in design and environmental concerns, the long-awaited store will replace the current 30,930-square-foot building with a state-of-the-art 45,000-square-foot full-service facility.

Customers will see an increase of 5,035 square feet of retail space that is filled with special amenities.

The Gourmet Italia Pasta Cafe features made-to-order Mediterranean-style pasta dishes, cappuccino and espresso to eat in or take out.

A special section next to the deli offers chilled prepared meals for those too tired to cook.

Ye Olde Butcher Shoppe features custom-cut beef and pork, and ready-to-cook items such as meat loaf, stuffed tenderloins and shishkabob. Other



Mannheim Commissary workers stock shelves in preparation for the August grand opening.

customer options include vacuum-packed fresh beef and pork, rotisserie chicken, a salad bar, pizza and sandwiches.

The checkout system allows customers to use debit and credit cards for their purchases and the store has 333 parking spaces.

“The other store has no loading docks, warehouse or office space,” said Deputy Commissary Officer Robert Byrne. “We’ll be able to store food right here in the commissary. Everything will be in the store. We also have separate restrooms for customers, employees and baggers.” Baggers will also enjoy their own breakroom, complete with wall lockers.

“The new commissary will be a thrill for me to operate,” said Smith. “I am so anxious to show it to my customers. We will have many special events and prices during our opening days and I invite everyone to come and see this terrific new facility when it opens. It is a wonderful illustration of the five percent surcharge paid by each customer every time they shop.”

A grand opening and ribbon cutting ceremony will be held August 18.

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